

REMARKS

This reply is in response to the Final Office Action dated January 23, 2009. Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 10-12, 14-16, 19-22, 26, 28-30, 36, 39, 40, 42-44, 48-50, 52-54, 57-60, 64, 66-72, and 74 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 4-6, 10-12, 14-16, 19-22, 26, 28-30, 36, 39, 42-44, 48-50, 52-54, 57-60, 64, 66-72, and 74 stand rejected. Claims 2 and 40 are allowed.

Applicant has amended the Abstract to more accurately reflect the presently claimed invention. The abstract finds support throughout the application, but particularly in the claims. Entry is proper because no new matter has been added.

Applicant has cancelled claims 1 and 39 without prejudice, reserving the right to pursue the cancelled subject matter in a separate divisional and/or continuation application.

Applicant has amended allowed claims 2 and 40 to correct grammatical/typographical errors. As such, those amendments are not in response to the cited prior art nor directed to the patentability of the invention. Those proposed amendments are also not intended to narrow the claims or otherwise limit the scope of equivalents thereof. Further, no additional search of consideration is required after Final since the proposed amendments are merely intended to clarify aspects of the invention that have been previously searched and considered.

Applicant has also amended claims 4-6, 10, 13-14, 19, 26, 36, 43-44, 48, 52, 57, 60, 64, 69, and 74 to depend on either allowed base claims 2 or 40. Such amended claims are now in condition for allowance.

Entry of the foregoing amendments and reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to claims 1 and 39. Applicant has cancelled claims 1 and 39 for reasons stated above, rendering this objection moot. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejection – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1 and 39 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(c) as being anticipated by Waagard (U.S. Patent No. 7,019,837; hereafter "Waagard").

Applicant has cancelled claims 1 and 39 for reasons stated above, rendering this rejection moot. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 4-6, 10-12, 14-16, 19-21, 26, 28-30, 36, 43-44, 48-50, 52-54, 57-59, 60, 64, 66-69, 72, and 74 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Waagard in view of Prohaska et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,208,776; hereafter "Prohaska").

Applicant has amended claims 4-6, 10, 13-14, 19, 26, 36, 43-44, 48, 52, 57, 60, 64, 69, and 74, obviating the objection. Claims 4-6, 10-12, 14-16, 19-21, 26, 28-30, 36 have been amended to depend from allowed claim 2, and claims 43-44, 48-50, 52-54, 57-59, 60, 64, 66-70, 72, and 74 have been amended to depend from allowed claim 40. Accordingly, claims 4-6, 10-12, 14-16, 19-21, 26, 28-30, 36, 43-44, 48-50, 52-54, 57-59, 60, 64, 66-70, 72, and 74, are now in a condition for allowance for at least the same reasons as claims 2 and 40. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Claim 71 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Waagard in view of Prohaska further in view of Hodgson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,269,198; hereafter "Hodgson").

Applicant has amended the claims, rendering this rejection moot. More particularly, claim 71 depends from claim 70, which in turn depends from claim 69, which has been amended to depend from allowed claim 40. Accordingly, claim 71 is now in a condition for allowance for at least the same reasons as claim 40, and intervening claims 69 and 70. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of the claim is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Applicant invites the Examiner to telephone the undersigned attorney if there are any issues outstanding which have not been addressed to the Examiner's satisfaction.

March 16, 2009

Date

Respectfully submitted,



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